

ANNOUNCER: From the City of St. Louis, please welcome Mayor Francis Slay.

MAYOR SLAY: Good morning to everyone this morning and it's great to have you in St. Louis. It is my pleasure as the mayor of St. Louis to welcome you here for the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation.

Over the next several days, you will have the opportunity and I'm sure the repeated opportunity to listen to dozens of representatives from Federal departments and agencies, executives from private, non-profit and for-profit institutions, educators and other involved citizens and to discuss the implementation of Federal laws relating to the environment and natural resources toward the goal of cooperative conservation. I'm sure that their presentations and the ensuing discussions will be informative and helpful. They will also, however, be indoors.

President Bush has convened this conference and I know that he expects each and every one of you to attend each and every session. And while we know that no mayor has the authority to urge you to ignore a direct Presidential Executive Order, if you were by chance to step outside these doors of this convention center you will find a city ready and able to show you many things. About a mile from this podium, there's a little ice cream shop that serves the best chocolate banana malt in the world, making exceptional use of our agriculture resources.

Five blocks from the convention center is a work of steel and iron art that rises four stories into the air. This unique structure made entirely from recycled materials functions both as sculpture and as a playground. You find at most times of the day and evening that there will be children climbing all over the structure surrounded by anxious parents.

A block closer there's a public elementary school in a recycled loft building with a glassed-in science lab and greenhouse being built on the 10th floor above street level. And on most of the blocks surrounding the convention center, you will find cranes, earth movers, scaffolds and construction crews recycling a former store and garment district into wonderful lofts, apartment, retail and office space.

If you're a baseball fan, you came to the right place. You may be interested in a half-built new ballpark in the entertainment district about a mile from the last row of this auditorium and of course, there's a really big river right up the street flanked by one of the most

beautiful Federal landmarks in the entire nation, the Gateway Arch and we're very proud of that.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my hope that wherever you go in the City of St. Louis you will find that we are proud of our city and we are friendly to our visitors. I can't officially pardon for violating an executive order of the President of the United States but I am certain that President Bush won't fault you too much for taking some advice from this mayor to get out and enjoy St. Louis. It really is a great city. Thank you for having this conference in our city and welcome to St. Louis.